



Two Mark 30 Years with BART

Milt Waalkens (left) and Robert Draper have marked their 30th anniversary as BART employees.

Robert Draper joined BART in 1970 as a communications technician, working on radios, the Public Address system and closed circuit TV. In 1977, he became a fore-worker on the day shift. Bob has recorded 20 years of perfect attendance, since attendance has been tracked, according to Bob's manager Tony Williams. "He's actually been out sick only four days in all his 30 years, I think the first year due to the flu," said Tony. "Bob's very dependable."

Best known for his union activism, Milt Waalkens is the former president of SEIU, Local 790. He was instrumental in organizing the union that is now SEIU Local 790, BART chapter, and continues to be active as Chief Steward for the AFC Technicians. For 23 years, Milt held the position of either President or Vice President of Local 790. In all his 30 years at BART, Milt has always been an AFC technician. BART recently sent Milt to Boston and San Diego to evaluate the mechanical integrity of new AFC equipment that is being manufactured for the District. **b3**

Station Agents Keep it Real

BART Station Agents are playing a significant role in going that extra mile as BART's ridership continues to grow. Challenges are met every day by a cadre of professional agents dedicated to making BART a premier experience, for the first-time rider and for the seasoned patron.

"Station agents are at the heart of our system when it comes to meeting customer needs," says Donna Johnson, supervisor, R-Line. "A good interaction with a station agent can turn what seems like a crisis into a positive experience for the customer. Agents also extend a hand to first-time riders, helping them with travel plans and to figure out the system, thereby turning them into repeat customers.

"Station agents proactively manage customer service issues — like helping with invalid tickets and aged AFC equipment — to turn chaos into order," says Donna. "They're doing great work on the front line."

Luther McGill is a Station Agent at the Fruitvale Station. "The best thing about being an agent is interacting with people, especially the first-time rider. I show them how to use the ticket vending machine, and how to navigate the system. I go that extra mile to also help them complete their trip, figuring out transfers and the like. They come back and say everything was great.

"Many times I have heard, 'the machine won't take my dollar.' The key is patience to deal with people. Before I came to BART, I worked 18

Continued on page 5

25 Years with BART



*Congratulations to BART employees reaching 25 years of service with the District: (left to right) Richard Mikla, Roy Dieterich, Linda On, Tony Gieda, Ray Crist and Robert Quon. **b3***

A key player and a great guy — Heeeeere's John Bauer!

In 70 years of hearty life, John Bauer has owned just three cars — a '56 Chevy that lasted 21 years, a '77 Toyota pick-up that also lasted 21 years, and now he drives a 1998 pick-up. If reliability is the call, then John Bauer is your man.

John is a Foreworker III (power support controller) in charge of the electrification system on the day shift at the Operations Control Center. John is "one of our greatest assets," says Doug Hom. "He's totally dedicated to making the Control Center a better place. The OCC has evolved into a higher place with his guidance. He's a key player."

John has trained everyone in the control center, notes Doug. "We owe him so much with respect to his knowledge and experience. He continues to better himself and the control center. It's an honor to pay tribute to him.

"He loves his work and he loves what he's doing," Doug continues. "John is highly respected and loved for his person and for his experience."

John is known for playing a key role in the SFO extension project. "Engineers for the SFO project are planning their engineering around what John tells them," says Doug. "What he does ties into all the emergency equipment and traction power. John gets called first for advice and input (on the distribution system for the electric third rail). John doesn't expect accolades because he enjoys what he does. He's unpretentious and unassuming."

Wanda O'Toole says John has many stories, especially about his military experience. "His military career was the love of his life," she says. John joined the Air Force on June 25, 1950. After finishing communications school, he was stationed in Japan and then Hawaii. He was stationed in Korea


four times during the Korean War. Re-enlisting in 1954, John went to the Pentagon then was assigned in 1956 to return to Korea to operate communications equipment at a Marine base. John served in NORAD for 18 months, then switched careers to a traffic controller in 1959. He accepted a Command Post Specialist job as a Technical Sergeant in 1964 in charge of missiles and aircraft, which earned him a Top Secret clearance. He was stationed in Viet Nam until 1965. John's military career also took him to Spain, Germany and California. He retired from the Air Force with 21 years, 3 months of service to our nation.

John came to BART on January 1, 1972 as an Engineering Aide I, maintenance dispatcher in OCC, and was promoted to Engineering Aide II in May 1972. He became a power support controller (Foreworker II) in February 1975 and received his current promotion in June 1976.


A resident of Vallejo, John is known for always helping out his neighbors, says Wanda. He has three children and five grandchildren, including a son in the Vallejo Police Department. A daughter and her children live with John.

"When John turned 70 in April, we threw him a surprise birthday party, but he didn't realize it was for him," says Wanda. "He asked us whose birthday it was, and we were walking right toward him with the birthday cake and singing him 'Happy Birthday.' It was a total surprise!"

"He's fun to work with and a very nice man," said Wanda.

Here's to a man of honor, accomplishment and respect. John Bauer, your colleagues in OCC salute you. 

The new Transportation Supervisor's Training Program presented certificates to its first class of students after a week-long long training session between BART's Transportation Department, Training and Development and AFSCME. The program provided new supervisors with relevant training for their new positions in Transportation. Pictured

left to right: Alex Serrano, Al Johnson, Jeannie Rawlinson, Pam Kessinger, Karen Shoemaker, Wanda McPherson, Paul Liston, Tom Margro, Lynn Fischer, Dave Hood, Len Jann, Anita Gonzalves and Andy Torres 



BART "Draggins" a Winning Team

The annual International Dragon Boat Races held August 12 and 13 in Oakland's Estuary have come and gone, leaving some powerful memories for BART's intrepid team, which had its best year of three years competing in this colorful event.

Co-led this year by the Daly City Shop's Jack Westlie and Lake Merritt's Mike Quintana, the BART Draggins hit their stride with their best time yet, beating out 15 of the 18 teams in their division. The team, numbering 26 plus extra boards were just about evenly divided between men and women.

Last year the team's best time in this grueling 500 meter series of races was somewhere over three minutes, which is pretty much the standard for novice racers. But this year, through hard work, grit, a high spirit and war paint on their faces, the BART Draggins ratcheted up their determination and knocked off up to 45.5 seconds in a race where the difference can some times be a tenth of a second. The team's best time in the last race was 2.42 minutes.

The way Jack Westlie sees it, the team adopted a winning spirit early on as the practice sessions in Lake Merritt and the Estuary took shape beginning a few weeks before race time.

"It was fantastic to see everyone coming out to participate and pull together as a team, digging their paddles into the water like there was no tomorrow," Westlie said. "There was a lot of camaraderie right from the start."

Quintana, who steered the boat and called the strokes, said the "Power 10" strokes, which the team maintained in the crunch, was the key to the team's success this year.

"It's a little like going the extra mile, working off of pure adrenaline," he said.

"When we crossed the finish line first in one race on Sunday, the second day of the race, against three other boats, it was an absolutely great moment for everyone," Quintana said. "You could feel this tremendous sense of pride running through the team members as they strode up the gangway to the cheers of the crowd and high fives from competing teams.

Both Westlie and Quintana had high praise for Roger Garfinkle, a volunteer coach from The California International Dragon Boat Association who worked closely with the team every stroke of the way.

It should be noted that while Quintana called strokes from the rear of the boat our own Rose Sandoval beat out the time on a huge drum at the front end of the boat.

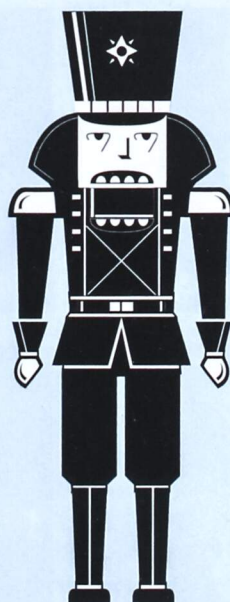
When the final tally was in the BART Draggins had won a trophy for third place in the 18-team division, a long way from three years ago.

Volunteering to cover the event with their cameras at the ready were James Hicks and Marcos Dubon, both from the Daly City shop.

Anyone thinking they might like to join up for next year should contact Jack Westlie at ext. 2778. **b3**



Congratulations to the "Draggin's" for their hard work and dedication. Pictured (back row, left to right): Joni McCarty, George Pratt, Gene Teixeira and Sandy Westlie; (middle row, left to right): Tomoko Ishii and Keesha Williams; (front row, left to right): Mike Quintana, Jack Westlie, Cindy Westlie, Jan McCarty and Phil Merilos. (Not pictured: Rich Altamirano, Mike Healy, Vivian Gunderson, Justice Ivanich, Jacob Westlie, Sadie Williams, Melissa Westlie, Rose Sandoval, Kevin McCarty, Ron Morales, Mike McCarty, Dave Harman, Cindy Young, Jason Chin, Jimmy Lau, James Post, Angela Teixeira, Diane Post, Jason Whittig and Scott Smith)



Employee Holiday Craft Faire


Friday, December 1

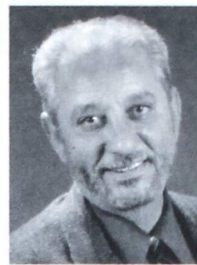
Please contact Vicki Wills
at ext. 7115 if you would
like to participate.

Space is limited.

5 Years Perfect Attendance!

Beyond the usual vacation, holiday and comp time, these employees have taken no other time off of their jobs for five years, including sick leave and disability leave. The District recently honored 38 BART employees for "Excellent Attendance."

Congratulations to the following BART employees for five years of Excellent Attendance. 



Graig Anderson



Mary Andrew-Galavz



Pete Baker



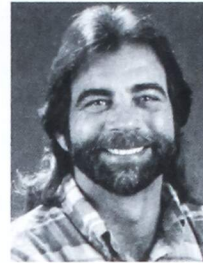
Erick Bonifacio



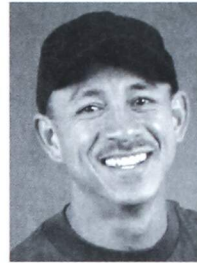
Pui Lan Hui
(Alice) Chan



Percival Dawson



Dave Defrates



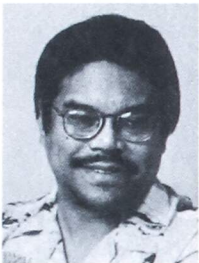
Robert Domingo



John Donahue



Kenneth Duron



Alan Evangelista



Joy Fields



W. A. Gomes



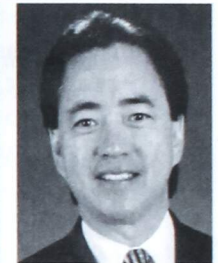
Lisa Gorrel



Greg Graham



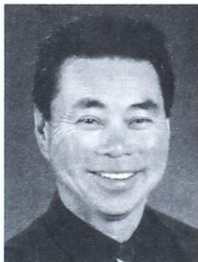
Irene G. Gray



Douglas Hom



Tom I. Jeffries



Len Jann



Jean Machlik-Riel



Marianne
McDaniel



William F. Means



Robert Mina



Kwai C. (Sue) Ng



Anna O'Keefe



Christopher Ortiz



Thomas Parker



Jess C. Perez, Jr.



Guillermo Ruiz



Simon
Salugsugan



Patrick J. Scott



Thomas Shaw



Carl Smith



Dale Smith



Sean Steele



Spencer R.
Thorpe, III



Ruby Woo



Larry Zeigler

Bowl Away the Lazy Days of Summer

Take a little time to cool off from the hot summer heat by visiting your local bowling alley! The BART Bowling League welcomes new bowlers to all of its monthly singles tournaments. It's a great time out!

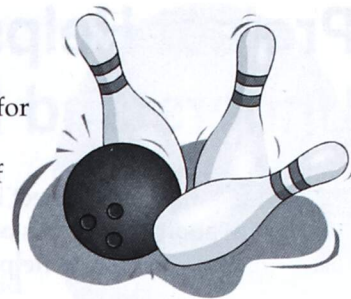
BART bowlers got together in June and July to have some fun. Pinole Valley Lanes was the place to be on June 24 when the League welcomed new bowler Kim White. Top Game honors went to Harry Straub (254) and Glenda Olson (288), while the Top Series nods went to Dick Jann (686) and Suzanne Hicks (639). The Top Five bowlers were Glenda, Dick, Harry, Andy Williams and Suzanne. Also along for the fun were Joe Olson, new bowler Kim, Johnnie Hicks, Renee Roberts and Troy Roberts.

On July 29, the league convened at Castro Village Bowl, where the Olisons reigned as King and Queen of bowling! Top Game went to Joe Olson (275) and Glenda Olson (238), who also ranked One and Two in the Top Five line-up.

Congrats to Harry Straub (635) for Top Series and Suzanne Hicks (640). Hats off to the Top Five of Joe, Glenda, Suzanne, Harry and Johnnie Hicks, and to Dick Jann and Andy Williams for coming along for the fun.

"Bowling is fun and a great time with your BART friends," says league coordinator Andy Williams. With each Saturday afternoon tournament, rotating trophies go to the Top Five scorers for both women and men. The BART Bowling League is open to all BART employees, and their family and friends over age 18. "Come on down. The bowling's fine!"

For information on BART Bowling League tournaments in September and upcoming months, call Andy Williams at ext. 5153 or Glenda Olson at ext. 2794. **b3**



Station Agents *continued from front page*

years in the restaurant industry, where I worked with a lot of different people. Having a customer service attitude is also important, like knowing the other transit systems that BART connects to. Customers are always asking where to catch a bus. You need to know the other systems and have the information that customers need. That's good customer service."

Luther has been a Station Agent for four years, and came in third in the recent BART Rodeo in the station agent competition. "I like the challenge, and look forward to next year. I hope to compete at the international event."

Marjorie Washington is a Station Agent at the Berkeley Station. "You get to meet so many different people in this job, especially international visitors who are tourists. We also get a lot of students going over to UC Berkeley, many of them are new to the community and new to BART. I feel like an Ambassador for BART and the local community, answering questions about how to get places, whether they're students

or international visitors.

"Tempers flare when equipment fails. I try to calm down the customer and help solve the problem. I try not to personalize it; they're not angry at me. They're angry at the equipment or the fact that they're running late."

Marjorie has been a Station Agent for 11 years, and formerly drove a Greyhound bus. She came in second in the recent BART Rodeo. "It was fun. I look forward to next year's competition."

Station Agent Charlotte Newton (M Line) came in first place, earning the honor to go to the international competition in St. Louis to observe. (She wasn't available for an interview for this article.) BART advocates an event for station agents at the APTA International Rodeo.

Congratulations to Charlotte, Marjorie and Luther, and to all BART Station Agents for your hard work and dedication, keeping it real on the front line. **b3**

GREAT IDEA BY BART EMPLOYEE



BART employees help increase efficiency and save costs by presenting their ideas for improving BART operations to the Employee Suggestion Program. They are duly rewarded for their proposals. Please note, some employees receive a net payment once state and federal taxes have been deducted from the award. Here is one recent awardee and his idea:

Alan A. Evangelista Inspector, Rolling Stock & Shops

A vacuum alone could not do the job to clean up all the dust and grit created during the traction stoning process. Airborne particles wound up on the floor, under the car, and on the mechanic. Alan Evangelista recommended fabricating a special tool — a vacuum hood from the traction motor brush holder. By positioning the hood closer to the point of origin, dust and grit particles could be vacuumed up, thereby creating a more healthy work environment for the mechanics. Alan's idea was found to improve the design and effectiveness of the vacuum hose attachments, earning him a \$150 safety award. **b3**

Project Helps Train Operators, Mechanics Understand Each Other's Job

The C-Line Team Project is helping Train Operators learn more about what goes on behind the scenes in the Concord Shop, and helping mechanics see through the eyes of train operators.

This cross-training effort began last April to bring operators into the shop to see how mechanics complete repairs with the objective of preparing them to be better troubleshooters. "They come in and take a look under the cars and see how we deal with problem vehicles," said shop manager Jim Wiscarson. "By seeing what mechanics go through, what they're looking for, operators are better prepared for failures on the mainline and are able to gather better information."

The project is also placing Transit Vehicle Mechanics and Electronic Technicians into cabs with Train Operators "so they can understand the pressure the operator goes through when a

car fails with passengers aboard," said Jim. "The operators are under the gun to get the train operating again. Mechanics will gain an understanding of the need for good-running vehicles and why some information on failed vehicles is limited."

"The whole idea of this project is to tear down the wall of miscommunication," Jim stated. "We want train operators to feel comfortable coming into the shop to ask questions. We want to open up communication."

So far, eight train operators have gone through the cross-training program. "We'll get train operators very familiar with shop operations before we send the mechanics out with them," noted Jim. About 80 train operators and 80 mechanics are expected to complete the program over the next 18 months.

b



20 Years with BART

Hats off to BART employees reaching 20 years of service with the District: (left to right) Boyd Ferriera, Michael Q. Santos, Donna Wilkinson, Thomas Smith, Gloria Martin, Melvin Benz, Denise Richardson, Floyd Miller and Durwin Brisco. **b**



15 Years with BART

BART employees who recently achieved 15 years with the District include (left to right) Franklin Kurtzman, Dean Leonard, Tiffany Li, Robert Scott and Phillip Petagara. **b**

Talia Perez Nominated for 'Who's Who' in High School Students

Daughter of April Whitson-Slaughter

Talia Cabral Perez, the daughter of April Whitson-Slaughter, has been nominated for the 1999-2000 edition of 'Who's Who Among American High School Students,' an honor reserved for only 5 percent of our nation's high school students each year. "I am so proud of her," says April, who has worked in Procurement since July 1990. "All of her family members here in California and New York are extremely proud of her achievement."

Since 1967, the major objective of "Who's Who" has been to recognize the achievements of outstanding students who have contributed to their schools and community. The outstanding students who are nominated by high school faculty members, youth groups and educational organizations represent approximately 20,000 schools throughout the U.S. The 34th annual "Who's Who Among American High School Students" will be distributed to up to 15,000 college and university admissions offices, libraries and high schools.

Talia, who turned 17 on August 22 and has a five-year-old brother, will be a junior this year at Hayward High School with a 3.75 Grade Point Average. Faculty at Hayward High School nominated Talia for the "Who's Who" award. Talia is active in the Puente English-Spanish Club and the Black Student Union at Hayward High, and will participate next summer in First Choice, a program that helps mostly minority students take college preparatory classes while they are still in high school. Talia has played the violin and was a gymnast. Her current hobbies include reading, swimming and going to the movies.

Talia plans to attend college and study to be a pediatrician, says April. "She'll take a lot of science courses once she gets to the university." **b**



Recycling Program Expands

BART's deskside paper recycling program has expanded to 1000 Broadway and the Hayward Training facility, due to its success and popular appeal.

Earlier this year, BART rolled out a revised recycling program with a new deskside system for collecting recyclable paper. In the first three months of operation at four BART locations, white paper collection totaled 3.17 tons, for a 400 percent increase over the previous three-month cycle. Just over a quarter ton of mixed paper was collected, along with nearly 3.4 tons of computer printout paper.

With this success, BART stopped using a vendor that had charged BART to pick up recyclable paper. A new vendor is now servicing the recycling program at no charge, picking up paper and paying BART for the recyclable paper it sells. BART is now realizing a monthly financial benefit of about \$300.

"It's not about the money, it's about wise resource management," says Terry Adelman, who organized the new recycling program. "It is entirely employee-centered and based on the commitment of BART employees to do the right thing. They are volunteers in this program, willingly recycling more paper and making a difference. This shows the pride of the people of BART."

New recycling containers went to employees at the Broadway and Hayward locations in mid-August. Results will be tabulated on a quarterly basis.

In mid-March, employees at the Lake Merritt Administration, the Metro and Madison Square buildings

began participating in the recycling program, along with Wayside. Under the program, the employee has a blue deskside container to collect paper. The employee must empty the paper into central collection bins that are color coded – white for white paper and gray for mixed paper. Computer printout paper can be collected with white paper, but it's preferable to separate it out and place it in its own container at the central collection points.

"BART employees have a well-earned reputation for efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle," said BART General Manager Tom Margro. "Please keep up the good work. I encourage you to take advantage of advancing our contribution to a healthy environment."

Thanks to all BART employees for participating in the paper recycling program. Thanks also to Terry and the recycling committee of Phillis Pinkston, Ken Prince and Melva Hunter for spearheading the effort to improve recycling at BART. Employees desiring additional recycling containers for their desks can contact Ken Prince at 510-464-6753. **b**



Judy Colmenero Remembered

The BART family has lost a very cherished member in Judy Colmenero, who recently passed away.

Judith Colmenero, 54, died from ovarian cancer on June 15 after battling the disease for just over two years. Her funeral mass was held June 20 at St. Augustine's Catholic Church in Pleasanton. Judy worked at BART for about 23 years, most of them in Reliability Engineering as a systems performance analyst. She was also in Payroll. Judy is fondly remembered by many of her BART friends.

"Judy was a very lovely lady and a special friend," said Rachel Heath. "She brought sunshine and happiness to all who came in contact with her. I miss her friendly smile."

"She was my best friend at BART," said Scott Fanning, who worked with Judy for 15 years. "She had a bubbly personality and made coming to work fun. We socialized from time to time, including going to the theater and dancing. Judy just loved to dance. She made the office more lively and fun. Judy was well known throughout BART. She'll be missed for a long time."

Engineers frequently asked to work with Judy because she was well liked by them all, recalls Ruel Robbins. "She had a great sense of humor," he said. "She saw the humor in things around the office."

"Judy was a good, solid technical support person," Ruel continued. "We were all so impressed with her conscientiousness, even when she learned she had cancer. She'd come in to work (even though she didn't feel well). We were a small part of her family; she wanted to be here for the companionship. Judy made us feel better knowing that she liked being here."

"Judy was very brave, she never shirked, she was never too fearful," Ruel said. "She made an impression, and left behind some very good friends."

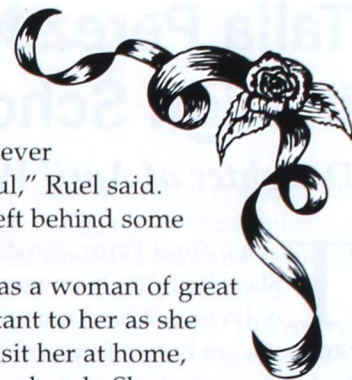
Ruel also noted that Judy was a woman of great faith, which became very important to her as she became more ill. Many would visit her at home, and take her out for outings at the beach. She came from a large and very close family. Her mother is still alive, and Judy leaves behind a daughter and two grandsons.

Lisa Eisler remembers Judy as "very sweet and very upbeat. Judy always had a laugh and a smile. She was very thoughtful and a good friend."

At one point, BART employees were invited to donate vacation time to help Judy. Wilbur Wong in Personnel confirms that 55 people donated a total of 700 hours of vacation time to help Judy during her illness.

Lisa Villalobos and Sheree Redding West shared their remembrance of Judy Colmenero. "We enjoyed coming to work to be able to spend time with Judy. As great friends, we were connected in a way that nobody could understand or come close to understanding. She was a true and honest friend who brought us joy, laughter and sunshine on a gloomy day. Judy had a contagious smile, a very uplifting personality and she was easy to love. There will be many people who walk in and out of our lives. But only true friends leave their footprints in our hearts. We are so grateful that Judy left her footprints."

"Everyone who knew her knew that Judy was a kind and compassionate person," said Ken Watkins. "Her friendship was not ordinary. Once her bright eyes, sense of humor and sensitivities worked their way into your life, there was no getting rid of her. Her unique blend of gullibility and wisdom, compassion and impatience, faults and perfection made her a real human being, and a real friend. She was the first co-worker I ever established a close relationship with, and the first friend I have had pass away. I miss her most when my little girl does something special and I think, 'Wait until I tell Judy about this' – then I realize that I can't. How do you say it in one sentence? Judy loved and was loved." **b3**



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BARTalk 800 Madison Street Oakland, CA 94607



A publication for and about the employees of the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District

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